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loss of this island, would, by peacefully transferring it to the United States, derive more profit from the free commerce that would spring up with her, favored above all other nations by ancient associations and common language and tastes, than from the best contrived system of colonial taxation.

Cuba commands the sympathies of every friend of freedom. Shall she not be liberated from the despotic power of Spain? When liberated, can she comfortably remain independent, with hungry John Bull on one side, and greedy Jonathan on the other? Either country would propose a connection to the island far more advantageous for it than solitary independence. Surely we can afford to outbid England; for even if we do not want it ourselves, we cannot permit it to go into the possession of any other powerful nation.

We watch with interest, not to say jealousy, every new development relating to this island, and trust that the time will be hastened when, if not ours, it shall become, by the introduction of such liberal institutions of government, of learning, and of religion as we enjoy, what Nature seems to have designed it to be, the *Queen of the Antilles* and the *garden of the world*.

ART. VII.—*Thesaurus of English Words, so classified and arranged as to facilitate the Expression of Ideas and assist in Literary Composition.* By PETER MARK ROGET, late Secretary of the Royal Society, Author of the Bridgewater Treatise on Animal and Vegetable Physiology, &c. *Revised and edited, with a List of Foreign Words, defined in English, and other Additions.* By BARNAS SEARS, D.D., Secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education. Boston: Gould & Lincoln. 12mo. pp. 468.

WE congratulate that large, respectable, inexpressive, and unexpressed class of thinkers, who are continually complaining of the barrenness of their vocabulary as compared with the affluence of their ideas, on the appearance of Dr. Roget's

volume. If it does nothing else, it will bring a popular theory of verbal expression to the test; and if that theory be correct, we count upon witnessing a mob of mute Miltons and Baccons, and speechless Chathams and Burkes, crowding and tramping into print. Dr. Roget, for a moderate fee, prescribes the verbal medicine which will relieve the congestion of their thoughts. All the tools and implements employed by all the poets and philosophers of England can be obtained at his shop. The idea being given, he guarantees in every case to supply the word. Dr. Sears, the American editor, has, it is true, deemed it his duty to retrench the exuberance of the original in the phraseology of slang, and has thus made it a useless book to a numerous and constantly increasing class of *beaux-esprits*, whose conceptions and passions would find no adequate vent in any dialect milder and cleaner than that which derives its force and flavor from Billingsgate and Wapping; but for all ordinary purposes, either of copiousness or condensation, of elegance or energy, Dr. Roget's volume, as weeded by Dr. Sears, will be found to be amply sufficient. Indeed, if the apt use of words be a mechanical exercise, we cannot doubt that this immense mass of the raw material of expression will be rapidly manufactured into history, philosophy, poetry, and eloquence.

Seriously, we consider this book as one of the best of a numerous class, whose aim is to secure the results without imposing the tasks of labor, to arrive at ends by a dexterous dodging of means, to accelerate the tongue without accelerating the faculties. It is an outside remedy for an inward defect. In our opinion, the work mistakes the whole process by which living thought makes its way into living words, and it might be thoroughly mastered without conveying any real power or facility of expression. In saying this, we do not mean that the knack of mechanical rhetoric may not be more readily caught, and that fluency in the use of words may not be increased, by its study. But rhetoric is not a knack, and fluency is not expression. The crop of ready writers, of correct writers, of elegant writers, of writers capable of using words in every mode but the right one, is already sufficiently large to meet the current demand for intellectual husk, chaff,

and stubble. The tendency of the time to divorce the body of words from the soul of expression, and to shrivel up language into a mummy of thought, would seem to need the rein rather than the whip. The most cursory glance over much of the "literature" of the day, so called, will indicate the peculiar form of marasmus under which the life of language is in danger of being slowly consumed. The most hopeless characteristic of this literature is its complacent exhibition of distressing excellences,—its evident incapacity to rise into promising faults. The terms are such as are employed by the best writers, the grammar is good, the morality excellent, the information accurate, the reflections sensible, yet the whole composition neither contains nor can communicate intellectual or moral life; and a critical eulogium on its merits sounds like the certificate of a schoolmaster as to the negative virtues of his pupils. This fluent debility, which never stumbles into ideas nor stutters into passion, which calls its commonplace comprehensiveness, and styles its sedate languor repose, would, if put upon a short allowance of words, and compelled to purchase language at the expense of conquering obstacles, be likely to evince some spasms of genuine expression; but it is hardly reasonable to expect this verbal abstemiousness at a period when the whole wealth of the English tongue is placed at the disposal of the puniest whipsters of rhetoric,—when the art of writing is avowedly taught on the principle of imitating the "best models,"—when words are worked into the ears of the young in the hope that something will be found answering to them in their brains,—and when Dr. Peter Mark Roget, who never happened on a verbal felicity or uttered a "thought-executing" word in the course of his long and useful life, rushes about, book in hand, to tempt unthinking and unimpassioned mediocrity into the delusion, that its disconnected glimpses of truths never fairly grasped, and its faint movements of embryo aspirations which never broke their shell, can be worded by his specifics into creative thought and passion. The bill of fare is indeed immense; what a pity that the absence of such insignificant elements as mouths, stomachs, and the appetite of hunger, may preclude the possibility of a feast!

Far, therefore, from being disposed to increase the vocabulary of such writers, and students of the art of writing, by books like this "Thesaurus," we grudge them the words they have already pressed into their service. They have not earned the right to use their words by exercising any inward energy of thought on the things to which they relate. The first condition of true expression is an effort of mind, which restrains rather than stimulates fluency. The ease with which accredited maxims derived through the ear can be attached to words which have been decoyed through the same populous thoroughfare, offers a desperate temptation to avoid the trouble equally of thinking and expressing. The ears write. Take, for example, the truths of morality and religion, which unrealizing minds and rapid pens have so hardened into truisms, that it has become a mark of genius to restore and revivify their original freshness and power. Now there are few creatures so pitiable as to need information on these topics, and few writers so stupid as to be unable to give it. What is required is not information, but inspiration. The maxims and doctrines are the commonest furniture of the commonest minds. The office, therefore, of the moralist is to impart, not moral truisms, but moral life. The office of the preacher is not to communicate the forms of religious doctrine, but to infuse the substance of religious vitality. All moralizing and all preaching are ineffective, which do not thus strike through the understanding directly at the will, and purify and invigorate the sources of moral and religious action. But to do this, requires a face to face knowledge of the truths to be driven home, — vivid inward experience poured out in living, breathing, palpitating words. The man who eliminates from these universal principles their divine significance and awful beauty, and prattles about them as truisms, soon becomes as dull, dry, and feeble as his topics, and his poverty of soul is just as evident when his diction is elegant and copious as when it is mean and pinched. The treasures of language, poured into such a mind, are "like money dropped into a dead man's hand."

What is really wanted, therefore, "to facilitate the expression of ideas," is something which will facilitate the concep-

tion of ideas. What is really wanted "to assist in literary composition," is a true philosophy of expression, founded on a knowledge of the nature and operations of the mind, and of the vital processes by which thought incarnates and drapes itself in words. Expression is a purely mental act, the work of the same blended force and insight, will and intelligence, that thinks. Its power and clearness answer to the power and clearness of the mind whence it proceeds. Its peculiarities correspond to the peculiarities of the individual nature it represents. Its perfection consists in identifying words with things, — in bending language to the form, and pervading it with the vitality, of the thought it aims to arrest and embody. In those cases where thought transcends the sensuous capacities of language to utter its conceptions, the expression will still magically suggest the idea or mood it cannot directly convey, just as a more than earthly beauty looks out from the beautiful faces of Raphael's Madonnas, indicating the subtile passage into form of a soul and sentiment which no mere form could express. There are no more simple words than "green," "sweetness," and "rest," yet what depth and intensity of significance shines in Chaucer's "green," — what a still ecstasy of religious bliss irradiates "sweetness" as it drops from the pen of Jonathan Edwards, — what celestial repose beams from "rest" as it lies on the page of Barrow! The moods seem to transcend the resources of language, yet they are expressed in common words, transfigured, sanctified, imparadised, by the spiritual vitality which streams through them. The words are among the cheapest articles in Dr. Roget's voluminous catalogue; but where is the cunning rhetorician who can obtain them there?

Expression, then, whether direct or suggestive, is thought *in* the words or *through* the words, and not thought *and* the words. Thought implies two elements, the subject thinking and the object thought. When the process of thinking reaches that degree of intensity in which the object of thought is seen in clear vision, — when the thinking mind comes into direct contact with the objective thing or idea it has "felt after" and found, — the words which it then weaves into the visible garment of its mingled emotion and conception are words sur-

charged and flooded with life,— words which are living things, endowed with the power, not only to communicate ideas, but to convey, as by spiritual conductors, the shock and thrill which attended their conception. Instead of being mere barren signs of abstract notions, they become media through which the life of one mind is radiated into other minds. They inspire as well as inform; invigorate as well as enlighten. Such language is the spiritual body of the thinker, which never dies or grows old, but has a relative immortality on earth, and makes him a contemporary with all succeeding generations; for in such language not only are thoughts embodied, but words are ensouled.

The fact, that expression like this is beyond the power of ordinary minds, does not affect its value as a guiding principle of rhetorical education. The difficulty is that the principle is not generally admitted. It is supposed that the development and the discipline of thought are to be conducted apart from the development and discipline of the power of expressing thought. Fill your head with words, and when you get an idea fit it to them,— this is the current mode, prolific in famished intellects and starveling expressions. Hence the prevailing lack of intellectual conscientiousness, or closeness of expression to the thing,— a palpable interval between them being revealed at the first probe of analysis. Words and things having thus no vital principle of union, being, in fact, attached or tied together, they can be easily detached or unbound, and the expression accordingly bears but the similitude of life.

But it is honorable to human nature that men hate to write unless inspired to write. As soon as rhetoric becomes a mechanical exercise it becomes a joyless drudgery, and drudgery ends in a mental disgust which impairs even the power to drudge. There is consequently a continual tendency to rebel against commonplace, even among those engaged in its service. But the passage from this intellectual apathy to intellectual character commonly lies through intellectual anarchy. The literature of facts connected by truisms, and the literature of things connected by principles, are divided by a wide, chaotic domain, appropriated to the literature of desperation; and gen-

erally the first token that a writer has become disgusted with the truisms of the understanding is his ostentatious parade of the paradoxes of sensibility. He begins to rave the moment he ceases to repeat.

Now the vital processes of thought and expression are processes of no single faculty or impulse, but of a whole nature, and mere sensibility, or mere understanding, or mere imagination, or mere will, can never of itself produce the effects of that collected, concentrated, personal power, in which will, intellect, and sensibility are all consolidated in an individuality. The utmost strain and stir of the impulses can but mimic strength, when they are disconnected from character. Passion, in the minds of the anarchists of letters, instead of being poured through the intellect to stimulate intelligence into power, frets and foams into mere passionateness. It does not condense the faculty in which it inheres, but diffuses the faculty to which it coheres. It makes especial claim to force; but the force of simple sensibility is a pretentious force, evincing no general might of nature, no innate, original, self-centred energy. It blusters furiously about its personal vigor, and lays a bullying emphasis on the "ME," but its self-assertion is without self-poise or self-might. The grand object of its tempestuous conceit is to make a little nature, split into fragmentary faculties and impulses, and disporting a convulsive feebleness in a slushy expansiveness of language, look like a great nature, stirred by strong passions, illumined by positive ideas, and directed to definite ends. And it must be admitted that, so far as the public is concerned, it often succeeds in the deception. Commonplace, though crazed into strange shapes by the *delirium tremens* of sensibility, and uttering itself in strange shrieks and screams, is essentially commonplace still; but it often passes for the frenzy and upward, rocket-like rush of impassioned imagination. The writer, therefore, who is enabled, by a felicitous deformity of nature, to indulge in it, contrives to make many sensible people guilty of the blasphemy of calling him a genius; and if he have the knack of rhyming, and can set to music his agonies of weakness and ecstasies of imbecility, he is puffed as a great poet, superior to all the restraints of artistic law, and is allowed to huddle

together appetite and aspiration, earth and heaven, man and God, in a truculent fashion peculiarly his own.

The misuse of words in this literature of ungoverned or ungovernable sensibility has become so general as to threaten the validity of all definitions. The connection between sign and thing signified has been so severed, that it resembles the logic of that eminent master of argumentation, of whom it was said, "that his premises might be afflicted with the confluent small-pox without his conclusion being in any danger of catching it." Objects are distorted, relations disturbed, language put upon the rack to torment it into intensity, and the whole composition seems, like Tennyson's organ, to be "groaning for power," yet the result both of the mental and verbal bombast is simply a feverish feebleness, equally infecting thought and style. Big and passionate as are the words, and terrible as has been their execution in competent hands, they resolutely refuse to do the work of dunces and maniacs. The spirits are called, but they decline to come.

Yet this resounding emptiness of diction is not without popularity and influence, though its popularity has no deep roots and its influence is shallow. Its superficial effectiveness is indicated, not more by the success of the passionate men who fall naturally into it, than by the success of the shrewd men who coldly imitate it. Thus Sheridan, who of all orators had the least sensibility and the most wit and cunning, adopted in many of his speeches a style as bloated as his own face, full of fustian deliberately manufactured, and rant which betrays the most painful elaboration. Our own legislative eloquence is singularly rich in speeches whose diction is a happy compound of politic wrath and flimsy fancies, glowing with rage worthy of Counsellor Phillips's philippics, and spangled with flowers that might have been gathered in the garden of Mr. Hervey's "Meditations." But we should do great injustice to these orators if we supposed them as foolish as they try to make themselves appear in their eloquence; and it is safe to impute more than ordinary reptile sagacity, and more than ordinary skill in party management, to those politicians who indulge in more than ordinary nonsense in their declamations. The incapacity to feel, which

their bombast evinces, proves they are in no danger of being whirled into imprudences by the mad emotions they affect. Such oratory, however, has a brassy taint and ring inexpressibly distasteful both to the physical and intellectual sense, and its deliberate hypocrisy of feeling is a sure sign of profligacy of mind.

It is only, however, when sensibility is genuine and predominant, that it produces that anarchy of the intellect in which the literature of desperation, as contrasted with the literature of inspiration, has its source. The chief characteristic of this literature is absence of restraint. Its law is lawlessness. It is developed according to no interior principle of growth; it adapts itself to no exterior principle of art. In view of this, it is somewhat singular that so large a portion of its products should be characterized by such essential mediocrity, since it might be supposed that a common nature, disordered by passion, and unrestrained by law, with a brain made irritable, if not sensitive, by internal rage, would exhibit some hysteric bursts of genius. But a sharp inspection reveals, in a majority of cases, that it is the old commonplace galvanized. Its heat is not that of fire, but of hot water, and no fusing power is perceptible in its weltering expanse. We are reluctantly compelled to admit that chaos cannot create, and that a great display of fussiness may be consistent with a lamentable lack of force.

Even in those writers in whom this sensibility is connected with some genius, and the elements of whose minds exhibit marks of spontaneous power, we are continually impressed with the impotence of anarchy to create, or combine, or portray. They never present the thing itself about which they rave, but only their feelings about the thing. They project into nature and life the same confusion of objects and relations which exists in their own minds, and stir without satisfying. That misrepresentation is a mental as well as moral offence, and that no intellect is sound unless it be conscientiously close to the truth of things in perception and expression, are maxims which they scorn to allow as checks on their freedom of impulse. But with all their bluster, they cannot con-

ceal the limitation of their natures in the impudence of their claims.

And this brings us to the consideration of words as media for the emission and transpiration of character,—as expressions, not simply of thoughts or emotions, but of natures,—as modes by which literature is pervaded with vitality and peopled with men, so that a criticism on styles is resolved into an exposition of persons. This function of language seems to us its noblest, because its most honest function. Words, to be sure, never really lie, though appearances are sometimes strongly against them. The truth leaks out from the most hypocritical sentences; and we have repeatedly read books, manufactured on Dr. Roget's pattern, in which the words seemed to feel degraded by the drudgery they were engaged in, to a practised ear audibly grumbled at being turned from "nimble servitors" into stupid slaves, and every moment eagerly gave in evidence against their taskmasters. Again, it is undoubtedly true, that a good portion of the sensuality, vulgarity, misanthropy, malignity, and littleness of soul, which take a literary form, is communicated in the phrases and images of their opposites, but communicated almost as effectively as if the words belonged to that varying class of terms which "no young lady ought to read." Indeed, if there be any animating life behind or within a composition, that peculiar life, and no other, will escape into the consciousness of the reader, without regard to the nature of the opinions or the language in which they are clothed. A satanic drop in the blood makes a clergyman preach diabolism from scriptural texts, and a philanthropist inculcate misanthropy from the rostrum of reform. It is all love in words, all hatred in spirit; and the Devil is content. An oversight of this obvious principle converts criticism into a mere gibberish. Take, for instance, such writers as P. J. Bailey and Alexander Smith, two of the most hopeful desperadoes of "young literature," quick in apprehension, fertile in fancy, ravenous in impulse, and whose sad baggage of a muse has been loudly hailed as the true celestial maiden on the sole evidence of her robes. Doubtless, through the crack in their heads split by passion, we have a view of quite a splendid anarchy of faculties and sensibilities,—doubtless

they are adorned with some of the most gorgeous trappings of poetry, — but still they are not essentially poets. They give us, not poetry, but a poetic debauch. They evince an appetite for the ideal, rather than a sentiment for it, and whether it pleases them to soar into heaven or dive into hell, whether they take us among saints or sinners, a predominant animalism, penetrating every shining phrase and image, is the impression they stamp upon the mind. The thing does not taste well in the mouth, — gives no ideal pleasure or satisfaction; and, for our own part, we confess a preference for Dante, Milton, and Goethe on the same themes, though we cheerfully admit their inferiority in intellectual topsy-turviness and the blaze of words. Were the powers and passions of these desperate gentlemen harmonized into unity, we should see at once how moderate is the real size and weight of natures, which appear of such astounding dimensions and force in their shattered state. By this compression, however, they might dwindle into — poets, — poets of the second class, it is true, but still poets, which they are altogether too splendid and sublime to be at present.

If the latent nature of a writer thus struggles through his words, and hypocrisy, conscious or unconscious, in his mode of writing, fails to conceal his disposition, — if mental anarchy, though wielding all the external resources of language, can still express only itself, — there would seem to be very strong inducements in literature for authors to be honest. Many a poor wight, who struts in the purple and fine linen of verbiage, a target for criticism, would be an interesting object if he were content with the homely suits which exactly fit his conceptions. Every writer whose aim is not to appear, but to be, and who directs his powers to the expression of what he really is, succeeds, at least, in making himself readable; for such a writer urges no opinions which have not been domesticated in his own understanding, testifies to no facts which are not realities to his own consciousness, and uses no words which he has not earned the right to use by testing their conformity to his own impressions or insight. And it is curious how flexible language becomes when a writer's vocabulary is thus limited by his intellectual character, and with what ease a few

words do the whole business of expression. A presiding personality, indeed, acts as a magnet; all related words come tripping to it, as if eager and glad to leave their limbo of generality and form part of a new organism, to feel through their shrunken veins the flow and throb of fresh, warm blood, and to partake in the rapture of individual existence. Then language really becomes alive, and thus, too, books attain the power to live. All others, after a few convulsive efforts, die and are forgotten, or are known only to the antiquary who prowls among the cemeteries of letters, reading inscriptions on tombstones.

We do not, of course, mean to assert that all individualities that take a literary form become conspicuous in becoming genuine. The compositions which embody poverty and littleness of individual being must exist in the obscurity in which they were born, but they still exist. The benevolent literary historian who visits them in their dingy paper hovels always finds them in a wretched condition, but always finds them alive. Perhaps the lowest form of what we call intellectual character is visible in the pamphlets of those political hacks, who, from Walpole's time to that of Lord Chatham, were employed by booksellers and statesmen to enlighten the British public on national affairs,—in other words, to do the dirty work of politics. These men undoubtedly exhibit singular littleness of nature, and singular feebleness of vitality; but still their minds act as units, and every sentence is steeped in the meanness and malevolence in which their whole life seems to have been absorbed. We are afraid that a dispassionate criticism must give them the appellation of ragamuffins and sneaks; but yet it is due to them to say that they are not ashamed of their characters, whether they were natural from their cradles, or acquired in the garrets of Osborne and Mist. They are most assuredly stupid, very stupid, but then their stupidity is a positive, and not a negative quality. Throughout their writings, we observe quite a laudable persistence in kind and fidelity to type, without any eccentric rhetorical deviations into brilliancy or decency. As we read them, even at this late day, their natures appear to ooze or dribble out in the vapid emphasis of every italicized word, in the sly venom

of every insinuated scandal, in the limping movement of every dismal witticism, in the lowness of all the lying statements, in the impotence of all the toothless sarcasms, in the vagabond disorder of all the rags of rhetoric. But then it is pleasant occasionally to be in the company of dunces who are so complacent in their duncery, who are stirred by no fretful aspiration to be fine writers, who are so thoroughly content with the puddle in which they live, and who, as true artists of the little and the low, would disdain to borrow the snapping terseness of Pope's verse, or the flowing richness of Bolingbroke's prose, or the manner of any other "eminent hands" and "persons of honor," in order to give their lean thoughts and reptile dispositions a more splendid verbal raiment than the physiognomical and characteristic one supplied from their own wardrobes. These writers, too, are by far the most honest of their kind. Minds as small and natures as mean as theirs have since addressed themselves to similar tasks without displaying similar frankness. From the time of Junius and Burke, the tom-tits of English politics have sported the beaks and talons, and arrayed themselves in the plumage, of the vultures and the eagles. The feeblest rancor aspires to wear the aspect of ravenous malignity, and the weakest pugnacity would tower and scream in the regions of imaginative passion.

The next form of intellectual character, whose verbal expression rewards analysis, is found in those men who deal with obvious facts and principles, but really grasp and handle them. Their sense is common sense, but common sense as character, not as hearsay. All their notions are organized into abilities and written out in their lives; truisms from their lips have the effect of original perceptions; and old saws and proverbs, worn to shreds by constant repetition, startle the ear like brilliant fancies, when uttered by men whose dispositions they have formed and whose actions they have guided. Such persons are commonly narrow and bigoted, and profess great contempt for everything that lies beyond the range of their vision. They delight, indeed, to call their opinions "views," in order, it would seem, to suggest the test of sight to which they have been subjected; and they give them additional emphasis by putting them in the possessive case. They are not

general "views," but "my views." These opinions have not been argued into their heads, and history and experience afford no instance of their having been ever argued out of them. Solidified as they are into muscle and bone, their hard tenacity of hold, impregnable to the syllogism, would almost resist the axe or the battering-ram. To change the "views" of such minds is a task resembling the boring of tunnels or blasting of rocks. Their phraseology, when its organic pith and substance are uncorrupted by the schoolmaster, is, of course, singularly close, compact, and vital, indicating an interior perception of, and familiar acquaintance with, the matters about which they talk. In English literature, these thinkers and rhetoricians of humble life are contemptuously referred to as "the vulgar," and young students are pathetically adjured not to catch the infection of their speech; but it seems to us that they hint the true philosophy of rhetoric better than Dr. Campbell directly teaches it, for their words are always things, and the aim of the loftiest creative thinker is, in expression, to give solidity to spiritual facts. Even in the use of tropes they evince a more subtile knowledge of the vital processes of figurative expression than most of the poetasters who sniff at them. "That horse of yours," said a friend of ours to a farmer, "is very handsome." "Yes," was the drawling reply, "but he is—as—slow—as—cold molasses." We doubt if an analyst could find, out of the great poets, a better example than this on which to exercise his skill in giving the genesis of an imaginative analogy. The idea, as Bacon would say, is thoroughly "immersed in matter." The authors who have studied the modes of thinking and expression characteristic of "the vulgar," have exercised the widest influence; for in that school they learned to think in the concrete, and to give to thoughts the form and significance of visible realities. The reserved power always underlying the sparse speech of ordinary men, imparts tenfold meaning and force to their words and images. Sir Edward Coke, a man of prodigious ability and acquirement, but still essentially commonplace in his intellect and prejudices, was once goaded by rage and hatred into an imagination in which his whole massive nature seemed to emit itself in a Titanic stutter of passion. We refer, of course,

to his calling Sir Walter Raleigh a "spider of hell," — an image in which loathing appeared to become executive, and palpably to smite its object on the cheek. It was from the fact that imagination was so small an element in his general power, and required the utmost depth of passion to be pushed into prominence, that it acted so like a bolt when it did flame fiercely out. The image may be a small matter in itself, but it becomes tremendous when we see the whole roused might of Sir Edward Coke glare terribly through it. The spider, indeed, appears to be a favorite symbol of ordinary fancies to express spite. Thus Henry Fox, in a hot attack on Lord Chancellor Hardwicke, who was supposed to have no desire to reform the many abuses of his office, exclaimed: "Touch but a cobweb in Westminster Hall, and *the old spider of the Law* is out upon you, with all his vermin at his heels." This image makes the flesh creep.

Common sense, as embodied in character, has a downright directness of expression often offensively dogmatic, though the dogmatism is not without justification in the evident certainty — the iron clutch — of its hold upon things. But in men of coarse strength of nature, endowed with broad perceptions on low levels of thought, this practical sagacity is apt to wax into conceit with itself, to be developed in connection with pride and self-will, and gradually to degenerate into a bearish arrogance of self-assertion, in which a good portion of its original clearness of view is obscured. The moment this divorce between force and insight occurs, will is pampered at the expense of understanding, and the result is a wilfulness, whose expression is marked by an overbearing dogmatism, hateful to all who delight in the dominion of reason over animal vigor and effrontery. Men of this stamp often preserve more than an ordinary degree of intellect, but it is a tool to be used, not a torch to guide. Both in literature and in life, they are the swashbucklers, bullies, and bravos of speech, unscrupulous, tyrannical, wrong-headed, ambitious to conquer rather than anxious to convince, and indisposed, indeed, to give any reasons for saying or doing a thing, so long as they can "bid their will avouch it." They are often very effective as writers, orators, statesmen, theologians, from their warlike

attitude and tactics, — using words as bullets, throwing off statements and arguments like successive discharges of cannon, and thoroughly understanding the art of rapidly concentrating the heaviest mass of invective on the weakest point of resistance. Lord Chancellor Thurlow is a shining example of the method in which opponents may be cowed or scattered by abuse, and offices of trust and honor taken by assault. By sheer strength of imperious, indomitable impudence, he pushed himself into high station, and, what is more, did what he pleased after he attained it. He was not content to rule ; he was unhappy unless he could domineer. During the time that he hung, “like a low, black cloud,” over the House of Lords, the proudest peers were abashed by the scowl of his shaggy brow, the ominous growl of his voice, “like thunder heard remote,” and the impending lightnings which seemed ready to dart from his eyes at the slightest touch of provocation. His means of success were immense confidence in himself, immense assumed contempt for others, and the favor of his Most Wilful Majesty, George III., who was attracted to him by a kindred spirit. He would have his own way. He unhesitatingly plotted against administrations of which he was himself a member, hectored statesmen of his own party, gave judgments in chancery without condescending to state reasons for them, and fairly bullied his contemporaries into the opinion that he was a great statesman and a great jurist. There was a fascination in his towering effrontery. George III. and his queen were eminently moral people, yet Thurlow was a favorite of both, though he openly defied moral restraints. When Chancellor, he was “keeper of the King’s conscience” and of a mistress, paraded his illegitimate children in public, and swore more terribly than ever did “our army in Flanders.” At one time, when the King was threatened with insanity, and was palpably incompetent to understand the acts which the Chancellor carried to him for his approval, Thurlow became impatient at the demands of his Majesty to have their purport explained to him. “It’s all — nonsense,” said the gruff Chancellor, “to try to make your Majesty understand them, and you had better consent to them at once.” He sometimes employed Mr. Justice Buller, a judge in every

respect his superior, to sit for him in the Court of Chancery, and praised his decisions publicly; but on its being said to him that it was remarkable that a Common Law judge should be so familiar with Equity, Thurlow exclaimed, "Equity! he knows no more of it than a horse; but he disposes somehow of the cases, and I seldom hear of them again." When Mr. Pitt's death was announced to him, he remarked, "A — good hand at turning a period!" This insolent assumption of superiority is stamped on all his speeches, public and private; and it must be admitted that he had completely mastered the art of individualizing language, and making words perform the office of blows and stabs.

There are many people who cannot recognize the presence of a powerful personality, except it be thus exhibited in salient personal traits. But personal force, in its healthy development, purifies itself from obtrusive individualities in proportion to the singleness and vigor of its aim and purpose, and in works of simple statement and argumentation we often feel the presence of character as a moving power, when it fails to be visible in obstructive singularities. It is character that states and reasons, though character broadened into understanding, and seemingly as impersonal as the facts and principles it grasps and expounds. Dr. Samuel Clarke, John Stuart Mill, Sir William Hamilton, and Daniel Webster, are instances in point. In the language of these men we observe an austere conscientiousness of phrase, as if every word had been severely tested and kept subordinate to the thought which it is used to convey. The sober and solid tramp of their style reflects the movement of intellects that palpably respect the relations and dimensions of things, and to which exaggeration would be immorality. We should hesitate to call them creative thinkers, and equally to place them in point of greatness below any but creative thinkers of the first class. It is indeed with a sigh of regret, that a critic who has studied Sir William Hamilton is compelled to station him not even abreast of Hobbes and Locke.

In passing from intellectual character of this testing and reasoning, but not especially originating, species to creative power, we do not at first ascend. Natures comparatively lit-

tle often exhibit faculties which are great in kind, though limited in degree, and exhibit them also as centred in character. In their expression there is none of the hardness which distinguishes the tough vitality and vigor of men in whom understanding predominates. The little there is in them melts, flows, fuses, shines. They can create and combine, though their creations and combinations be petty and of small account; and they leave the permanent print of their natures in those sly corners and crevices of the literature of a language, which the omnivorous general reader delights to explore. Colley Cibber, for instance, is a small creature enough, but still an indissoluble unit and representative of flippant character, endowed with a delightful little imagination exactly answering to the demands of his little nature, and fertile in little creations and bright and shallow gossip, always meaning well and never meaning much. Horace Walpole, a higher example of the same flippancy, built up, through an assimilation of all the frippery of literature and all the frippery of fashionable life, a character perfect in its kind, and within its sphere undoubtedly creative. The affectation of his style has its roots in the affectation of his nature, and it is an admirable style for him. The sarcastic pertness of his diction, in which wit and observation tend to crystallize in words, and become brittle as they grow sparkling, shows a nature not so fluid as Cibber's, and acting more by starts and flings of fanciful inspiration. His wit is unmistakably original, sometimes in kind. An old and pious lady, into whose hands some of Lord Rochester's licentious letters came, burned them,—"for which," Walpole petulantly says, "she is now burning in—heaven." Occasionally a single word does the work of a paragraph. "Lady —," he remarks in one of his letters, "looks ghastly and *going*."

Geniality is a finishing grace to intellectual character, and we especially feel its sweetness in natures of great reach and depth; but in minds whose endowments are by no means extraordinary, it sometimes amounts to a weakness. Leigh Hunt is an example of what we should call a fondling character, and a great master of its verbal expression. Language in his hands is the most flexible of instruments to convey

dainty and pleasant sensations. His self-content is so great, that it flows out in content with all the world. He fondles everything and everybody. Shakespeare, Spenser, Shelley, Coleridge, he dandles on his knee, as if they were babies, paws them, and would fill their dear little mouths with sugared epithets of eulogy. This he seems to think is genial criticism. Even divine things cannot escape his all-tolerating kindness; for, whatever sects and churches may say, he knows that the world was made after the image of Leigh Hunt. The Deity with him is not so much Infinite Goodness as infinite good-nature, and we believe he has lately published a devotional book to inculcate that doctrine. He talks very cosily about Dante, and appeals to the readers whom he conducts through the "Inferno," if they really can believe that such fine fellows as they there behold in torments ought to be treated in that way. Throughout his writings, indeed, he seems to think that the wax taper, which he holds so jauntily, can light up all the gloom and darkness of the moral universe. This foppery is of a different kind from Walpole's, and is much more delightful, but it is still foppery, though the foppery of philanthropy.

We have, doubtless, said more than enough respecting words as media for the transpiration of character, and it would be a waste of illustration to trace the working of the principle through other forms of personality, such as the sentimental, the satanic, the eccentric, the religious, and the heroic. In all of these, however, language is moulded into the organic body of thought, and the organisms stand out in literature with the distinctness and the diversity of organic forms in nature. The words are veined, and full of the lifeblood of the creative individualities projected into them with unsparing energy. In criticizing such works we soon discover that what we at first call faults of style are in reality faults of character. But such individualities are more or less narrow and peculiar; and it is only when we arrive at those rare natures, with sensibility, reason, fancy, wit, humor, imagination, all included in the operations of one mighty, spiritual force, which we feel to be greater than one or all of the faculties and passions, that we compass the full meaning of intellectual char-

acter in apprehending its highest form. Such men — Shakespeare, for example — appear to be impersonal simply because their personality is so broad. They are impersonal relatively, not positively. Capable of discerning, interpreting, representing, all actual and possible peculiarities of human character, they seem to have few peculiarities of their own. They have no leading idea, because they have so many ideas; no master passion, because they have so many passions; no hobby, great or little, sublime or mean, because they possess a vital conception of relations, as well as a vital conception of things and persons. But they never really pass, as creative minds, beyond the limits of their characters; for it is always men that create, not some vagrant faculty of men.

It is sometimes doubted if the style of such writers can be taken as the measure of their power and variety of power. Now there is in the smallest individual intelligence an abstract possibility which is never realized in any mode of expression while he is in the body, and this limitation is especially felt when we read the works of the greatest individualized intelligences. So far, and only so far, are we inclined to concede that the great masters and creators of language find in words but a partial expression of their natures. What is directly conveyed in words and images, according to their literal interpretation, is, of course, inadequate to fix and embody a mind like Shakespeare's; but then the marvel of Shakespeare's diction is its immense suggestiveness, — his power of radiating through new verbal combinations or through single expressions a life and meaning which they do not retain in their removal to dictionaries. When the thought is so subtle, or the emotion so evanescent, or the imagination so remote, that it cannot be flashed upon the "inward eye," it is hinted to the inward ear by some exquisite variation of tone. These irradiations and melodies of thought and feeling are seen and heard only by those who think into the words, but they are nevertheless there, whether perceived or not. An American essayist on Shakespeare, Mr. Emerson, in speaking of the impossibility of acting or reciting his plays, refers to this magical suggestiveness in a sentence almost as remarkable as the thing it describes. "The recitation," he says, "begins: one

golden word leaps out immortal from all this painted pedantry, *and sweetly torments us with invitations to its own inaccessible homes*"! He who has not felt this witchery in Shakespeare's style has never read him. He may have looked at the words, but has never looked into them.

We have been able, in these hasty observations on the use and misuse of words, to touch upon only a few topics connected with our theme. There are many others that would repay investigation, which we have hardly named, such as the intimate connection between clearness and freshness of expression, — the sources of the pleasure we take in style apart from the importance of the matter it conveys, — the difference between an author's expressing an idea to himself and expressing it to others, — the power of words, as wielded by a man of genius, to create or evoke in another mind the thought or emotion they embody, — the peculiar vitality and the amazing mystical significance of language when used as the organ for expressing the phenomena of rapture and ecstasy, — and the interior laws which regulate the construction and movement of style, according as the object is to narrate, describe, reason, or invent. But we have not space at present to consider these topics with the attention they deserve. In the somewhat extended remarks into which we have been provoked by the publication of Dr. Roget's "Thesaurus," we have confined ourselves to a few obvious principles, and have labored to show the hopelessness of all attempts to make language really express any thing finer, deeper, higher, or more forcible, than what lives in the mind and character of the writer who uses it. Especially in all that relates to strength of diction, we think it will be found that the utmost affluence in energetic terms will, of itself, fail to impress on style any vital energy of soul; for this energy, whether it work like lightning or like light, whether it smite and blast, or illumine and invigorate, ever comes from the presence of the man in the words.